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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 9, 2004

EX-CITY OFFICIAL AND TWO OTHERS CHARGED IN SCHEME TO FIX PARKING TICKETS

PHILADELPHIA – United States Attorney Patrick L. Meehan, Special Agent-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation Jeffrey Lampinski, and City of Philadelphia Inspector General William F. Gill, III today announced the filing of a nine-count indictment¹ charging defendants **JOSEPH F. HOFFMAN, CHARLES P. MIRARCHI, III, a/k/a “C.P.,” and MENACHEM REIBENBACH** with conspiracy, mail fraud, wire fraud, and Hobbs Act extortion.

According to the indictment, defendant JOSEPH F. HOFFMAN, a hearing examiner in the City’s Bureau of Administrative Adjudication (“BAA”), fixed parking tickets in exchange for payoffs of money, food and liquor, and in anticipation of future political contributions and favors by improperly dismissing tickets and reducing fines causing lost revenue of hundreds of thousands of dollars to the City of Philadelphia and undermining the public confidence in the honest, fair, and just administration of laws by BAA hearing examiners.

“The message this kind of behavior sends is that public trust is for sale at the right price,” said Meehan. “Taxpayers have the right to expect that they are going to be treated fairly and not based on their connections or willingness to do someone a favor. As the indictment alleges, the defendants set up a system in which the well-connected got a pass while everyone else waited in line.”

The indictment also charges that HOFFMAN concealed his scheme by making it appear that the parking tickets were being handled in the proper manner by directing that hearings on tickets he intended to fix be scheduled for a future date and causing notices of those future hearing dates to be sent to ticket holders by the United States mail.

According to the indictment, defendant CHARLES P. MIRARCHI, III, a Philadelphia lawyer, assisted HOFFMAN by making the ticket fixing look “legitimate” by entering appearances as a lawyer for ticket recipients he did not represent and for whom HOFFMAN was fixing tickets. The indictment also charges that HOFFMAN disguised his receipt of payments from ticket recipients by using MIRARCHI as a bagman to accept improper payoffs, which MIRARCHI later split with HOFFMAN. These payments were disguised as “retainers” for MIRARCHI, who had performed no legal services in return for these “retainers.”

¹An indictment is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Defendant MENACHEM REIBENBACH owned and operated several taxi cab companies and, according to the indictment, discussed making payoffs to HOFFMAN in exchange for HOFFMAN's help in dismissing or reducing thousands of dollars in outstanding parking tickets against the numerous taxi cabs operated by REIBENBACH and another person.

The total maximum sentence for Hoffman is 105 years imprisonment, a \$2,250,000 fine, three years supervised release and an \$900 special assessment.

The total maximum sentence for Mirarchi is 5 years, a \$250,000 fine, a three year term of supervised release and a \$100 special assessment.

The total maximum sentence for Reibenbach is 20 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, three years supervised release and a \$100 special assessment.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE DEFENDANTS

NAME	ADDRESS	AGE
Joseph F. Hoffman	Philadelphia, PA	48
Charles P. Mirarchi, III	Philadelphia, PA	53
Menachem Reibenbach	Langhorne, PA	55

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, with assistance from the Philadelphia Inspector General's Office and has been assigned to Assistant United States Attorneys Judy Goldstein Smith and Amy L. Kurland.

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